

1981

Harris County
Juvenile Probation Department

Annual Report

Dedication

The 1981 Harris County Juvenile Probation Department Annual Report is dedicated to the members of the Harris County Juvenile Board and Harris County Commissioners Court.

It is through their support and interest that the Probation Department continues to provide valuable and innovative services to the community and youth of Harris County.

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Harris County Judge and Commissioners



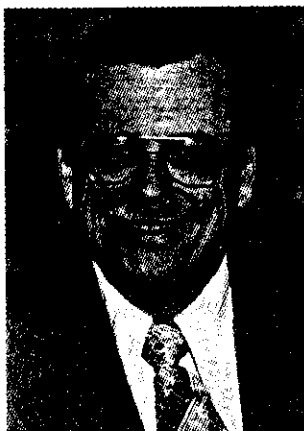
Honorable Jon Lindsay, County Judge



Tom Bass, Precinct 1



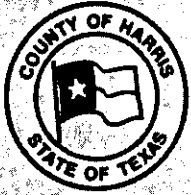
Jim Fonteno, Precinct 2



Bob Eckels, Precinct 3



E.A. "Squatty" Lyons, Jr., Precinct 4



HARRIS COUNTY JUVENILE BOARD

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Judge Jon Lindsay, *Chairman*
County Judge

Judge Robert B. Baum,
Vice Chairman
314th District Court

Judge Robert L. Lowry, *Secretary*
313th District Court

Judge Criss Cole
315th District Court

Judge William M. Hatten
176th District Court

Judge William Kilgarlin
215th District Court

Judge Wells Stewart
308th District Court

John A. Cocoros
Chief Juvenile Probation Officer

TO: Harris County Commissioners Court
Harris County Citizens

RE: Transmittal of 1981 Annual Report

Pursuant to Article 5139VV, Section 5(b) of the Texas Civil Statutes, the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department's 1981 ANNUAL REPORT is hereby transmitted to the Commissioners Court. The 1981 ANNUAL REPORT provides an overview of the Department's activities and accomplishments as governed by the Harris County Juvenile Board.

As Chairman of the Board and as County Judge, I commend the Harris County Commissioners Court, the members of the Juvenile Board, the citizens of Harris County and the staff of the Juvenile Probation Department for their continued support, effort, and interest in providing the best services possible for troubled children and their families.

Sincerely,

Jon Lindsay
Chairman
Harris County Juvenile Board

John A. Cocoros
Chief Officer
Director of Institutions



Robin C. Pledger
Asst. Chief Officer

Juvenile Probation Department

*3540 West Dallas Avenue
P. O. Box 13258
Houston, Texas 77219*

TO: *The Citizens of Harris County*

RE: *Transmittal of the Harris County Juvenile
Probation Department's 1981 ANNUAL REPORT*

1981 was the year that saw the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department take time to study and evaluate its programs for troubled youth and families. Numerous staff representing all facets of the Department, as well as representatives from our Judiciary, participated in this effort. From such a sound data base, the Department began streamlining existing programs along with initiating new ones to meet the needs of youth.

I want to recognize the staff of the Department for their dedicated effort to bring about constructive program changes while continuing to do the every day work of helping troubled youth. It is this high level of professionalism that offers the troubled youths of Harris County and their families the best possible services.

Respectfully,

John A. Cocoros

John A. Cocoros
Chief Juvenile Probation Officer



313th District Court
Judge Robert L. Lowry



County Judge
Honorable Jon Lindsay



215th District Court
Judge William W. Kilgarlin



314th District Court
Judge Robert B. Baum

HARRIS COUNTY JUVENILE BOARD



176th District Court
Judge William M. Hatten



315th District Court
Judge Criss Cole



308th District Court
Judge Wells Stewart

JUVENILE BOARD

The Harris County Juvenile Board consists of the County Judge as Chairman, the three State District Judges having juvenile jurisdiction, a State District Judge having family jurisdiction, a State District Judge having criminal jurisdiction, and a State District Judge having civil jurisdiction. Meeting monthly, this Board has the following statutory duties (paraphrased): approves the annual budget and submits to Commissioners Court for final approval; makes an annual written report to the Commissioners Court concerning the operation and efficiency of the Probation Department; investigates the operations of the Probation Department; subject to approval of the Commissioners Court, establishes a general personnel policy for the employees of the Department; and directs whether the District Clerk or Chief Juvenile Probation Officer shall receive and disburse Child Support payments.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE JUVENILE BOARD

Judge Robert B. Baum

314th District Court of Harris County

Judge Robert Baum received his law degree (Juris Doctor) from South Texas College of Law, Houston, in 1965, and practiced civil, criminal, and family law for 14 years. He was appointed Judge of the 314th District Court in 1979 by Governor William P. Clements, Jr., was elected to that bench in 1980, and is unopposed for re-election in 1982. Judge Baum is a member of the Family Law Sections of the Houston Bar Association and the State Bar of Texas, and is also a member of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. He was appointed by Governor Clements to the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, created by the 1981 Legislature to coordinate and set policy on a statewide basis for juvenile probation services.

Judge Baum is Vice-Chairman of the Harris County Juvenile Board, serves on numerous advisory boards including Harris County Juvenile Court Volunteers, Harris County Tri-Board, Avondale House, and Houston Marine Institute. He is also a member of the Executive Board of JIMS (Justice Information Management System of Harris County) and serves on the Houston Chamber of Commerce Crime Control Committee.

He has been a leader and an active worker with children and adults in the community, coached youth baseball for many years, and is active in his church and in civic organizations. Judge Baum taught law at South Texas College of Law and also at the Houston Community College where he further serves on the Real Estate Advisory Committee. He is a sports enthusiast, an avid jogger, and a long-time member of the downtown YMCA where he has served on the Board of Management.

Judge Criss Cole

315th District Court of Harris County

Judge Cole was appointed to the Bench in 1971. He received his bachelor's degree and law degree from the University of Houston. Judge Cole served in the Texas Legislature as a State Representative from 1955 to 1962 and as a State Senator for the State's most heavily populated senatorial district from 1962 to 1971. He is State General Chairman of the Texas Society for the Prevention of Blindness, a member of the Advisory Board of the Texas Treatment Center for Autism, Chairman of the Mental Retardation Section of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, and a member of the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Lions Club, Houston Bar Association, and State Bar Association.

Judge William M. Hatten

176th District Court of Harris County

Judge Hatten has presided over the 176th Criminal District Court since 1971. From 1964 to 1971 he was a Domestic Relations Court judge. Judge Hatten was actively engaged in the practice of law in both State and Federal Court from 1935 to 1964. He was a member of the Harris County-Houston Ship Channel Navigation District from 1960 to 1964. Judge Hatten is presently active in many civic, fraternal, and religious organizations.

Judge William W. Kilgarlin

215th District Court of Harris County

Judge Kilgarlin was appointed to the Bench in 1978 by Governor Dolph Briscoe. Judge Kilgarlin, a native Houstonian, was educated in the Houston Public Schools and received a B.S. degree from the University of Houston in 1954 and an L.L.B. degree from the University of Texas in 1962. He served as a Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Artillery, 1955-57. He was a member of the Texas Legislature from Harris County, 1959-61, and served as Harris County Democratic Chairman, 1962-66. As a practicing attorney, Judge Kilgarlin was active in Juvenile Court work.

Judge Jon Lindsay

County Judge of Harris County

Judge Lindsay has been Chairman of the Juvenile Board since 1975. He is presently serving his second term as County Judge and presiding officer of Commissioners Court. Judge Lindsay graduated from New Mexico State University and was a civil engineer before beginning his public service career. He believes that the Board's greatest challenge is to balance the needs of troubled youth with the ability of the taxpayers to support expanded services.

Judge Robert L. Lowry

313th District Court of Harris County

Judge Lowry was appointed Judge of the Juvenile Court of Harris County in 1965 by Governor John Connally and took office January 1, 1966. In 1977 he was appointed Judge of the 313th District Court by Governor Dolph Briscoe. He attended Southern Methodist University, Delta State College, and received his Doctor of Jurisprudence degree at the University of Houston Law School. Judge Lowry also attended the National College of Juvenile Court Judges in 1967, the Juvenile Judges Court Institute in 1968, and the National College of State Trial Judges in 1971. He was admitted to the State Bar of Texas in 1951.

Judge Lowry is a former Mayor of Hilshire Village (two terms), City Attorney of Hilshire Village for six years, and former member of Harris County Mayors and Councilmen Association. He is a former executive board member of the Community Council and a member of the Mental Health Services - Advisory Council of St. Joseph's Hospital. Judge Lowry was the Chairman for the Continuing Education Committee for Juvenile Court Judges in the State of Texas for two years and Former Member of the Advisory Committee, Chief Justice Task Force for Court Improvement. He was also chairman of the Governor's Juvenile Justice Conference Committee. He was instrumental in the creation of a New Juvenile Code for the State of Texas. He was also instrumental in setting up an automated system for the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department and the Harris County Juvenile Courts. Judge Lowry was selected to appear in Who's Who in Texas 1973-74; selected to appear in Outstanding Americans in the South in 1975; and selected to appear in Who's Who in American Law in 1977, and selected to appear in Who's Who in Houston 1980.

Judge Wells Stewart

308th District Court of Harris County

Judge Stewart has presided over the 308th Civil District Court of Domestic Relations since 1970. He received his B.B.A. from Princeton University in 1954, his L.L.B. from the University of Texas Law School in 1958, and his P.M.D. from Harvard University in 1962. From 1958 to 1959, 1961-1963 and 1966 to 1968, Judge Stewart served as an Assistant District Attorney in Harris County. He was in private practice from 1960 to 1964. In 1969 and 1970 he served as a County Criminal Court Judge. In 1957 he was the Director at the University of Texas Law School. He was Chairman of the Board at Stewart Title Guaranty Company from 1957 to 1963, Director of the Houston Junior Bar Association in 1959, Director of Goodwill Industries from 1960 to 1970, Director of Home Savings and Loan Association from 1963 through 1966, Director of Community Savings and Loan Association from 1964 through 1965, Director of the Board of Regents at Texas Southern University from 1966 through 1977, Director of the Houston Association of Big Brothers from 1971 to 1974, and Vice President of the Houston Youth Symphony and Ballet from 1970 through 1974 and currently active through 1980.



John A. Cocoros
Chief Juvenile Probation Officer

Mr. Cocoros has served as Chief Juvenile Probation Officer and Director of Institutions in Harris County since January, 1980. He earned his bachelor's degree in psychology from Maryland University in College Park, Maryland, and received his MSW from Howard University in Washington, D.C.

He served as Chief Juvenile Probation Officer with the Dallas County Juvenile Probation Department. He was employed by Sam Houston State University, Texas Criminal Justice Center, as Associate Professor and Program Director of Continuing Education in Criminal Justice from September, 1971 to January, 1979. He was with the National Council on Crime and Delinquency as the State Director for Texas from September, 1968 to August, 1971, and as State Director for Oklahoma from April, 1964 to August, 1968. Mr. Cocoros served with the Ohio Youth Commission from June, 1960 to April, 1964 as Chief of Community Development.

Mr. Cocoros serves as consultant for the American Correctional Association where he has written numerous articles and studies. He also served as consultant to the sub-committee to investigate juvenile delinquency with the Committee of the Judiciary in the U.S. Senate, as Consultant to the Senate Youth Affairs Committee for the State of Texas, and was consultant to the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice.

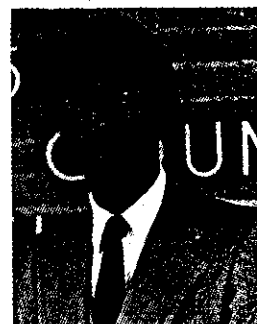
He is a current member of the Texas Correctional Association, the American Correctional Association, and the Texas Probation Association.

Administrative Staff



Robin Pledger, Assistant Chief Juvenile Probation Officer, has been with the Department since 1958. He was appointed Assistant Chief in December, 1981.

Bernard Hunter, Deputy Chief of Intake/Court Services, started with the Department in 1966. He was appointed Deputy in May, 1980.



John Peters, Deputy Chief of Institutions, joined the Probation staff in 1958 at the Harris County Youth Village. He was Director of that institution until his appointment as Deputy Chief in June, 1980.

Teresa Ramirez, Deputy Chief of Field Services, has been with the Department since 1977. Teresa was appointed Deputy Chief in December, 1981.



Donna Shults, Deputy Chief of Administrative Services, joined the Probation Department in 1952. She was appointed Deputy Chief in July, 1979.

1981 Highlights

Texas Juvenile Probation Commission Established

In 1981, the 67th Texas State Legislature passed CSHB 1704, creating the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. This statewide agency will set standards for Juvenile Probation officers and provide training and financial assistance for juvenile probation services throughout Texas.

Judge Robert Baum, of the 314th District Court, was appointed as one of the nine commissioners by Governor Clements to serve for the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission.

Burnett-Bayland Home Administrative Changes

The Burnett-Bayland Home was divided between Harris County Child Welfare and the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department in August, 1981 by Harris County Commissioners' Court. This division gives the Probation Department administrative responsibility for the six northernmost cottages, which will be programmed to serve up to sixty adjudicated delinquent children 10 years of age or older, and under 17 years of age.

Staff Commendations

The Harris County Juvenile Probation Department has cited meritorious service of certain staff members by selecting and acknowledging the most outstanding Juvenile Probation Officer, Staff Services Person and Administrator during 1981.

James Martins, Director of the Detention Home, received the **Boss of the Year** award. Lois Shelby, from Family Court Services, is this year's **Probation Officer of the Year**. The **Staff Services** award was presented to Grace Griffin, from Administration.

Juvenile Court Volunteer of the Year - 1981

John L. Trahan is the **Juvenile Court Volunteer of the Year** for 1981. He has been associated with the agency for 12 years. During that time, he has been assigned to 20 boys on the long term one-to-one and to 7 boys in the visitation program. In addition, he has participated in JCV training classes by sharing his varied experiences with prospective volunteers. He was selected for this honor by the JCV Board of Trustees because of his genuine concern for troubled youth, his willingness to share his time in presenting a positive male role model to boys, his dependable nature, and exemplary dedication.

Incentive Program Developed

During 1981, probation staff developed and implemented an Incentive Program, which is a motivational tool designed to allow the child on probation a chance to work him/her self off probation. The program is built on the concept of cooperation between parent and child to make behavioral changes and eliminate criminal behavior. If successful, the child can be terminated from probation in as little as eight months. If not successful, the consequence is the standard term of twelve months probation.

Comprehensive Services Study

Under the direction of Judge Criss Cole, a Comprehensive Services Study was prepared by staff representing each area of the Probation Department. This study identified current services, services needing expansion, and new services needed, but currently unavailable. Some of these findings have been implemented, while others are being examined for future development.

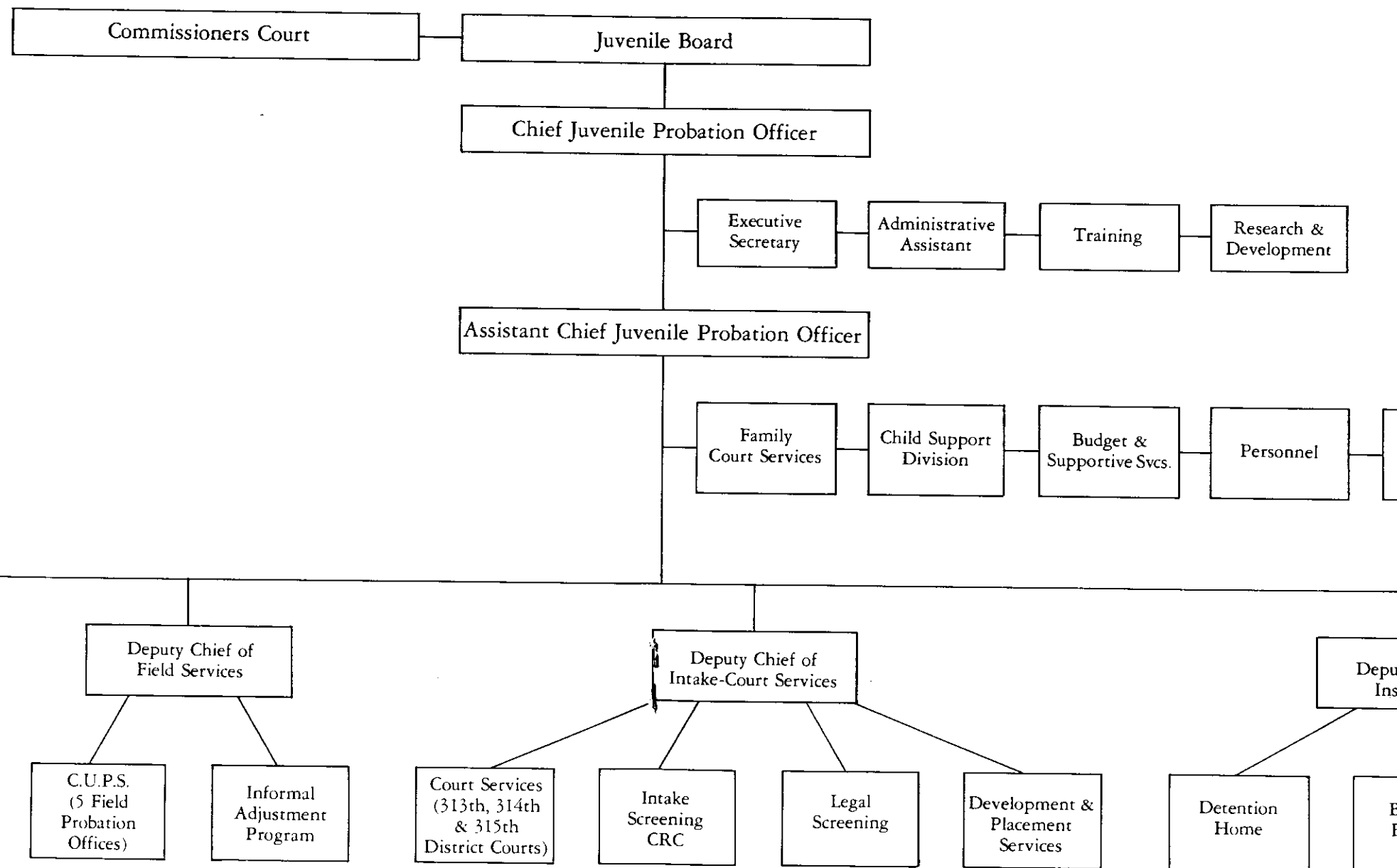
Training and Staff Development

Throughout 1981, staff had numerous training opportunities offered by the Department's Training and Staff Development Program. This included in-service training workshops and seminars, as well as state and national conferences.

Two separate programs also provided relevant training at the Department for Probation Officers. The Delinquency Prevention Training Project, sponsored by the Texas Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office, sponsored various workshops including The Probation Officer and Difficult Resistant Clients, Creative Management of Change, and Understanding the Family as a System. The Juvenile Justice Training Forums sponsored by the Texas Council on Crime and Delinquency, with the Probation Department, presented workshop topics such as The Juvenile Connection to Organized Crime, Child Pornography and Teenage Suicide.

Training on professional skills and current juvenile justice issues will continue to be offered for staff in order to provide the best possible services for our clients.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 1982



DESCRIPTION OF DIVISIONS

Court and Probation Services

In 1981, 17,117 referrals were received by the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department under the authority of the Family Code, Title III. This number consists of children 10 years of age or older and under 17 years of age, who had committed felonies, misdemeanors, and status offenses. Involved in the 17,117 referrals were 12,318 children of whom 52% were first offenders.

The Houston Police Department Accounted for 10,855, or 63% of all 1981 referrals. The Sheriff's Department and other police departments in Harris County made 5,942, or 35%, of the referrals, with the remaining 2% made by social agencies, parents, and others.

Nearly 40% of all referrals to the Probation Department were for delinquency offenses, and approximately sixty percent were for non-delinquency offenses (which included all status offenses and administrative referrals).

The following chart reflects a breakdown in number and percent of delinquency and non-delinquency offenses for 1981.

Offense	No.	%
Runaway	7,713	45.1
Theft	2,409	14.1
Burglary	1,903	11.1
Drug/Alcohol	1,082	6.3
Assaults	494	2.9
Robbery	191	1.1
Weapons	139	.8
Sex related	75	.4
Arson	45	.3
Homicide	35	.2
Att. Homicide	19	.1
Other	3,012	17.6
Total	17,117	100.00

In 1981, 2,338 requests were made for petitions to be filed by the District Attorney's Office. Of this number, 1,494 new petitions were filed; 723 were reopened; and 121 were declined by the District Attorney's Office. Juvenile Probation Department counts indicated the following court dispositions for those petitions filed or reopened:

Dispositions (1981 Referrals)*	Number
Probation	900
Texas Youth Council	343
Texas Youth Council Suspended	258
Mental Health/Mental Retardation	9
Placement Outside the Home	236
Dismissals	98
Denials	36
Not Delinquent	5
Certified	42
Other Dispositions	254
Cases Pending	36

*As of March 31, 1982

The part of the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department responsible for the overall diversion and screening of Juvenile referrals is the Intake Screening Division.

Upon receipt of a referral, the Intake Screening Officer takes the responsibility for evaluating the legal and social circumstances of the child and his family and then makes a decision to release the child to a responsible adult guardian, or detaining the child in the Detention Home pending the Court hearing.

Referrals are then forwarded from Intake Screening to the Legal Screening Unit. This Unit consists of two attorneys who act in the dual role of Legal Screening Officer and Special Prosecutor for the District Attorney's Office. The purpose of the unit is to review all felony and certain misdemeanor cases to determine if the legal grounds exist for further action by this Department. The Legal Screening Unit attorneys also represent the State in Detention Hearings.

Once delinquency or CHINS (children in need of supervision) petitions are filed by the Harris County District Attorney's Office, it becomes the responsibility of the specially skilled Court Intake Division to coordinate and verify all demographic data into a concise and cohesive report, including feasible dispositional alternatives, for presentation to the Courts. The twenty-three pre-Court investigators also handle motions to waive jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court and violations of probation. They additionally are responsible for all detention hearings, held every ten days, for those Court level respondents detained in the Harris County Detention Home.

Once a child is placed on probation by the Courts, the case is assigned to a probation officer who is officed in one of the five community units located throughout Harris County. This officer is responsible for supervising the child and assuring the Courts that all Court-ordered rules of probation are followed. In addition to supervision of the child, the juvenile probation officers are responsible for providing educational workshops and group activities, making school contacts, providing community referrals to their clients, and acting as a liaison with other social agencies. The Informal Adjustment Program, also performed by probation officers, provides counseling and supervision to youth referred to the Probation Department, but diverted from the Courts. This program served 497 youths during 1981.



Intake worker Lea La Duke interviews client.

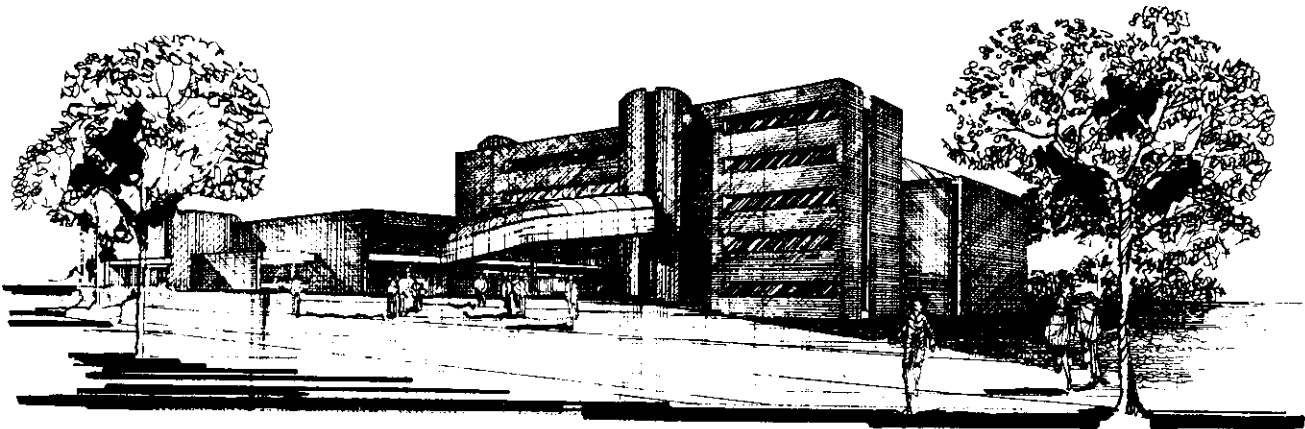
Juvenile Detention Home

The Juvenile Detention Home is in operation to serve the needs of any juvenile in Harris County who, under the Juvenile Code of Texas, is in need of safe and secure custody. The Juvenile Detention Home is a twenty-four hour total care facility. Children 10 years of age or older and under 17 years of age are detained for a variety of reasons, as defined by Title 3 of the Texas Family Code.

Emphasis is placed on the child and his unique problems during his/her stay in the Juvenile Detention Home. Every effort is made by the Detention Home staff to assure the child that he/she has not been placed in a punitive environment, that detention is temporary and necessary pending the outcome of the case.

The Juvenile Detention Home provides daily activities for all children, with many programs conducted by volunteer groups. Programming encompasses such activities as physical recreation, accredited education, a chartered Boy Scout Troop, arts and crafts, and aerobic classes. A complete religious program is available for any child who wishes to participate.

A staff medical team, including a physician, registered nurse, and four licensed vocational nurses, are available on a 24 hour basis to provide for the medical needs of the children detained. Also on staff is a family therapist who provides individual and group counseling in addition to crisis intervention.



The Juvenile Detention Home is in the process of remodeling and will soon begin building a new section onto the facility. The remodeling is expected to be completed by early summer, 1982. The new additions should be completed by the summer of 1984, and will provide 198 beds (private rooms) in 19 wings. This five floor addition to the facility will devote one floor to assessment and evaluation of youths upon their admission to Detention. Additionally, the Detention Home will have 19 multi-purpose rooms, 3 gyms, and 3 outdoor play areas to meet programming needs.

The length of stay in detention varied dependent on the child's case. However, the vast majority of children were detained for one day or less.

Length of Time In Detention	Number Of Admissions
Less than 24 hours	1,233
1 Day	1,531
2 Days	365
3-5 Days	366
3-30 Days	830
Over 30 Days	298
<hr/>	
Total	4,623

During 1981, the Detention Home recorded 4,623 admissions. The average age of all youths admitted to detention was 15, with males comprising 75% and females comprising 25% of these referrals.

All youths taken into custody and placed in a detention facility must have a Detention Hearing within 48 hours (or 2 working days). These hearings are held in the Detention Home by the Juvenile Courts Referee or Judge in her absence. If a child is detained, a Detention Hearing is held every 10 days until the child's court disposition.

As stated in Section 54.01 of the Texas Family Code, children are ordered detained in the Detention Center by the Referee for one or more of the following reasons: he/she is likely to abscond; suitable supervision, care or protection is not available; he/she is accused of committing a felony offense and may be dangerous to himself or others if released; if he/she has previously been found to be a delinquent child or has previously been convicted of a penal offense and is likely to commit an offense if released.

Referee

Veronica E. Morgan-Price was appointed to the Office of Referee in February, 1980. Prior to being appointed Referee for the Juvenile Division of the Harris County District Courts, she was Chief Prosecutor of the 315th (Juvenile) District Court. She received her bachelor's degree from Tennessee State University, attended University of Cincinnati Law School and received her Juris Doctorate Degree from Texas Southern Law School.

She is licensed to practice before the Texas Supreme Court, the Federal Court for the Southern District and the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. She is a member of the Advisory Board to the Greater Houston Safety Council, the Judicial Advisory Board of the Texas Para-Legal School, the Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Advisory Committee, and serves on the Advisory Board of the Youth Services Task Force of the Human Resources Department.



Burnett-Bayland Home

During 1981, the Burnett-Bayland Home experienced a variety of changes. Harris County Juvenile Probation and Harris County Child Welfare proposed that each agency had placement needs that would best be served by a division of administrative responsibility at the Burnett-Bayland Home campus. In August, 1981, Harris County Commissioners' Court approved certain recommended budget transfers to Harris County Child Welfare as the first phase in the proposed division. The proposal gave administrative responsibility for the six southernmost cottages for development of Child Welfare placement and programmatic needs. The remainder of the campus, including the six northernmost cottages continue under the jurisdiction of the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department. The division was completed ahead of schedule on December 31, 1981. Juvenile Probation will be able to serve up to 60 adjudicated delinquent children 10 years of age or older and under 17 years of age.

Burnett-Bayland Home continues to be a community-based institution whose goal is to provide a learning environment for our students and to prepare them for functional and productive reintegration into the community. The casework treatment function emphasizes family, adolescent and parent groups, and individual counseling. Children attend public schools and receive remedial help from both volunteers and professional staff at Burnett-Bayland Home.

Based on this treatment model developed from the Juvenile Probation Department's Comprehensive Services Study, the initial treatment program opened in October, 1981. Current planning indicates other treatment modalities will be developed as indicated by client and Department needs.



Director Robert Waller counsels with a resident on BBH campus.

Harris County Youth Village

The Harris County Youth Village is a 24 hour residential co-educational child care facility. Each resident is 10 years of age or older and under 17 years of age, and has been adjudicated as having engaged in delinquent conduct and placed in the custody of the Chief Juvenile Probation Officer for a period of up to one year.

In 1981, a total of 314 students were provided services at the Youth Village. The average daily population was 121 students, with the average length of stay between 9 and 12 months.

The Youth Village emphasizes a comprehensive treatment approach, including accredited remedial, educational and vocational classes, social-recreational programs, residential care, and casework services. These combined components assist students in making a positive reintegration into the community and with their families.

The Houston Independent School District's teaching staff provides the academic programs which include Building Construction Trades, Automotive Mechanics, Building Maintenance Trades and Home and Community Services. The cooperative and effective working relationships between the Youth Village and Houston Independent School District staff is a primary force in creating a successful treatment program for Youth Village residents.



Nelson Morgan, casework supervisor at the Youth Village, has an individual counseling session with a student.

Placement, Facilities Development And Related Services

In 1980 the name of this unit was changed from Comprehensive Child Care Services to Placement, Facilities Development and Related Services and was placed under the direct supervision of the Deputy Chief of Court Intake. This unit is responsible for direct placement, development of new facilities and programs, as well as monitoring and evaluation of existing facilities, the health care of children in placement, and comprehensive forensic services. This unit operates as a resource provider to the probation officers so that the best treatment plan for a child can be presented to the Juvenile Courts.

The Forensic Clinic, a cooperative effort between Juvenile Probation and the Mental Health & Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County, has provided an outstanding professional quality of forensic service delivery to the children appearing in Juvenile Courts. During 1981, the clinic performed 240 psychologicals, 152 psychiatric examinations, 34 family examinations, 39 mental retardation screenings, and 11 mental health screenings. There were 20 mental retardation petitions filed in 1981 as well as 13 mental health petitions.

The Harris County Department of Education completed 150 psycho-educational evaluations for the purpose of determining the best possible recommendations for services. The Texas Research Institute for Mental Science has provided neuropsychologicals and EEG's for 75 children. A family therapist is also employed through a contractual agreement to offer 40 hours of therapeutic services to designated families.

This year a specialty team was created to handle all suspected cases of mental retardation and mental illness. These workers have experience in the development of planned programming for the special needs of these children. In addition to the special duties, these workers also provide direct placement services to the probation officers.

Family Court Services

Family Court Services was created in 1973 to develop and provide quality social services for the Courts of Domestic Relations, the Juvenile Courts, and the Probate Courts in matters pertaining to adoptions and disputed child custody cases.

In 1977 the State Legislature expanded the family court system due to the large volume of cases filed and heard in these courts. Currently, there are twelve Family District Courts, with three acting as Juvenile Courts. The services provided by Family Court Services have likewise expanded to meet the needs of these courts in the social service area.

The Family Court Services Division is housed in the courthouse complex to assure availability to the courts when emergencies arise. All referrals are initiated by court order. A small intake unit pre-screens the cases, and refers those cases requiring social studies to court investigators for assignment. Home visits are made and social studies prepared on all adoption and disputed child custody cases in order to provide additional information to the courts to assist in determining what is best for the children involved. Social studies are also prepared for out-of-county agencies on a reciprocal basis.

Frequently, children are found to be living in unsuitable or dangerous situations which require legal custody to be placed with this Department, pending final hearings. The majority of these children are allowed to remain in homes of approved relatives under the supervision of Family Court Services. The growing need for placement facilities led to our present contractual arrangements with DePelchin Faith Home where custodial or foster care was provided for 32 of the 112 children who were placed in our legal custody during 1981.

Adoption and Custodial Investigations Performed by The Family Court Services

	<u>Adoption Investigations</u>	<u>Custody Investigations</u>
1981	1116	712
1980	1065	655
1979	1056	678
1978	1190	621
1977	1101	516
1976	1036	368
1975	1001	316



Mary Jo Wilkey, Family Court Services Investigator, listens to a child.

Child Support

The Harris County Child Support Division insures the timely receipt and disbursement of all Court ordered child support payments. In operation since 1935, Child Support's collection and disbursement of support payments has increased dramatically from the 360 cases during its first year to the 63,040 active cases in 1981. It is anticipated that active cases will increase by approximately 8% each year.

The Child Support staff must ensure both accuracy and expeditious processing of child support checks. The payments received each day are processed and checks are mailed to the recipient the following day.



Accuracy and efficiency are provided by the well qualified staff and sophisticated computer system. Pictured are June Higham and Sandra Garza entering data into the computer.

Child Support Enforcement

The Child Support Enforcement Program, statutorily created in 1975 as Title IV-D of the Social Security Act, operates in Harris County under a cooperative agreement between the Texas Department of Human Resources and the Commissioners' Court of Harris County. The program is designed to assist in locating absent parents, establishing paternity of children, and enforcing financial support obligations for these children.

Child Support Enforcement assistance is provided to all mothers (and fathers in some cases) who receive aid to families with dependent children (AFDC). Additionally, some families not receiving AFDC are also eligible for Child Support Enforcement assistance. When a support payment is sufficient to make a family ineligible for AFDC payments, the family leaves the welfare rolls and the support payment goes directly to them. Thus, the benefits of this program are dual in that the managing parent is assured of child support, while the State and Federal governments reduce the numbers receiving public assistance or welfare.

The Harris County Child Support Enforcement program handles a large number of AFDC, as well as non-AFDC cases, i.e., approximately 1,500 cases per month. The Child Support Enforcement Division of the Juvenile Probation Department has a staff of thirty-nine employees and incorporates four main divisions: intake, locate, legal, and accounts.

The Enforcement Program continues to be self-supporting. In 1981, Child Support Enforcement collected \$236,000 more than the total cost of the program.

Volunteers



The spirit of volunteerism in the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department is thriving due to the dedicated involvement of two volunteer programs from the Harris County community. The services that are available to our youth are increased and enhanced through our association with the Juvenile Court Volunteers and the Junior League of Houston.

Juvenile Court Volunteers is an agency designed to work with children who have had some contact with the juvenile authorities. The volunteers befriend these children as they act as a positive role model in steering them away from further involvement with the juvenile justice system.

During 1981, a monthly average of 125 Juvenile Court Volunteers served a total of 724 youths. This volunteer participation accounts for a total of 15,164 hours of volunteer work in the Detention Home Media Center; for visitation in detention and Chimney Rock Center (status offender center); and working with the child on probation on a one-to-one basis.

The Junior League of Houston, Inc., a tremendous enhancement to our Department since 1966, also has an integral part in various programs of the Department. During 1981, the Junior League placed 84 volunteers at the Probation Department. They were assigned to Intake Screening, and Informal Adjustment Program, the Detention Home, and the Youth Village.

The volunteer programs are rewarding for the volunteers who offer their talents and time, as well as the youth who benefit from them. The success of the volunteer programs shows the need for community involvement with the Probation Department in achieving its goal of helping Harris County youth.

State and Federal Grants

The Harris County Juvenile Probation Department has received numerous federal grant funds for unique and innovative programs. Since the dissolution of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration in 1979, the State of Texas used unexpended federal funds to continue grants through September 30, 1981. During this time, the State worked diligently to create a system to continue providing funds to local governments for correctional programs. In May, 1981, the 67th Texas Legislature passed an act creating the Texas Criminal Justice Division. Through this act, court costs imposed for the conviction of certain crimes were doubled and this money is to be used by the Criminal Justice Division to fund local grant programs. Twenty percent of these funds are to be used specifically for juvenile projects. The following are the grants awarded to this Department during 1981.

1. **Comprehensive Diagnosis, Evaluation and Treatment**
This grant provides funds to contract with two family therapists who perform family and individual therapy for children placed at two of the County institutions. It also provides funds for psychological counseling and testing for juveniles. \$ 41,059
2. **Supportive Treatment Project**
This project provides funds to place family therapists in each of the five Community Unit Probation Services offices and two of the County institutions. \$ 82,612
3. **Juvenile Case Screening**
The purpose of this grant is to provide funds to employ an attorney at the Department. The attorney reviews juvenile offenses for probable cause and whether the conditions of arrest and the facts of the investigation will allow prosecution. \$ 22,385
4. **Juvenile Court Volunteer Services**
This grant provides funds to contract services for staff to recruit, screen and train volunteers. The volunteers provide services to children on a one-to-one basis and in the Detention Home's Media Center. \$ 11,711

TOTAL: \$157,767

Summary of 1981 Expenditures

<u>Account</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Family Court Services (2-02)	\$ 789,863.00	6.47%
Juvenile Probation Department (2-64)	4,423,220.00	36.24%
Child Support (2-66)	636,872.00	5.22%
Child Support Enforcement (2-66B)	965,111.00	7.90%
Juvenile Detention Home (2-68)	1,645,306.00	13.49%
Burnett-Bayland Home (4-08)	1,077,919.00	8.83%
Youth Village (4-10)	1,680,003.00	13.77%
Comprehensive Child Care Services (4-34)	985,520.00	8.08%
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Total	\$12,203,814.00	100.00%

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